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Monday, March 26, 2018



TODAY'S COLUMN

[DAVID LEONHARDT: Winning political issue hiding in plain sight](#)

EDITOR'S NOTE: David Leonhardt is a columnist for *The New York Times*.

In Alabama's recent special Senate election, the progressive group Priorities USA was looking for ways to lift African-American voter turnout. So Priorities tested several different advertisements, to see which ones made people want to vote.

There was no shortage of potential ad material in Alabama. Roy Moore, the Republican nominee, had a trail of bigoted statements and alleged sexual molestation. Doug Jones, the Democrat, had prosecuted Ku Klux Klansmen for murder. Priorities tested each of these themes and others, too: Moore's ties to white supremacists; Moore's closeness to President Donald Trump; Jones' endorsements from civil-rights leaders.

Yet none of these tested as well as a 15-second ad that never mentioned

Moore.

“My kids are going to do more than just survive the bigotry and hatred,” [a female narrator says](#), as the video shows a Klan march and then a student at a desk. “They’re going to get an education, start a business, earn a good living, make me proud. Education is my priority. That’s why I’m voting for Doug Jones.”

The test results surprised the leaders of Priorities, and no wonder: We’re supposed to be living in a time of education skepticism. The media regularly run stories suggesting education is overrated. K-12 schools are said to be in a never-ending crisis, and college debt has become a new crisis. A much-discussed Pew Research Center poll recently found a jump in the number of people saying colleges had a negative effect on the country.

In truth, though, Americans’ attitudes toward education are much simpler than all of this noise suggests — just as that Alabama ad test found. Whatever complaints people may have about their local school or college costs, most have no doubt that their children need a good education. People see it as the most reliable path to a good life, and they are right.

The unemployment rate for college graduates [is a mere 2.3 percent](#). College graduates [earn vastly more](#) than non-graduates. Educational gaps in life expectancy and health status [are growing too](#).

When you start to dig into the education skepticism, you find that much of it collapses. Those journalists and academics publicly questioning the value of education? Many are desperately trying to get their own children into strong school systems and colleges. Their skepticism apparently applies only to other people’s kids.

And that Pew poll? It was legitimate but misunderstood. The rise in negative feelings toward colleges came largely among Republicans, many of whom see campuses as bastions of liberalism. Yet those Republicans still want their children to attend college. They understand that the benefits of education outweigh any risks of lefty brainwashing.

Last week, I asked the research group Morning Consult to conduct [a poll on education](#). The main question gave parents a list of schooling levels — high school, community college, four-year college — and asked which they wanted their own children to attain. The results were overwhelming: 74 percent chose four-year college, and another 9 percent chose community college. The progressive think tank Demos recently commissioned its own poll that found strikingly similar support for [increased higher-education funding](#).

The popularity of education offers a giant opportunity to politicians. It’s a chance to talk about something other than Trump — and be heard. Many voters, understandably, care more about their lives and their children’s future than about Stormy Daniels or Jared Kushner.

Conor Lamb, the Pennsylvania Democrat, just won in a heavily Republican district by focusing relentlessly on his constituents, not Trump. Education was [one of his themes](#). He told voters [he was bothered](#) that his brother and sister — both teachers — didn’t receive the gratitude that he did for being a

Marine.

Given the passions of the Trump era, this isn't the moment to settle for the modest, technocratic education proposals that Democrats often favor. It's a time for big, ambitious ideas.

In education, that means universal preschool, which would address both inequality and child-care needs, and universal tuition-free community college. A century ago, the United States led the world toward universal high school, and today's economy demands more than a high-school diploma. Community colleges are part of the answer, and are also a common pathway to four-year degrees. Importantly, free tuition there isn't a huge subsidy for the upper middle class and the affluent, who typically start at four-year colleges.

I was glad to see New Jersey's new Democratic governor, Phil Murphy, [propose free community college](#) and expanded pre-K for his state last week. And these ideas don't need to be partisan. Tennessee's Republican governor, Bill Haslam, has made his state's [community colleges tuition-free](#), while Georgia and Oklahoma have been pre-K leaders.

Sometimes, good policy and good politics align quite nicely. The single best bet that a society or an individual can make — education — also turns out to be the rare idea that transcends today's partisan divide.



Monday, March 26, 2018 -- A round up of opinion, commentary and analysis on: Thousands rally to demand action on guns, Cambridge Analytica sent foreigners to advise U.S. campaigns, Remington files for bankruptcy, opioid overdoses continue to plague state, green technology excites policy makers, offshore oil battles and more.

MARCH FOR OUR LIVES

[BRYAN MIMS & JODI LEESE GLUSCO: Across nation and in Raleigh, Durham thousands rally to demand action on guns](#) (WRAL-TV reports) -- In downtown Raleigh and Durham, and in communities across the state, nation and around the world, people gathered for March for Our Lives. The movement is inspired and led by the teen survivors of the latest mass school shooting, on Feb. 14 at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla.

[GERALD OWENS: DC crowd sends singular message: Common-sense gun laws](#)(WRAL-TV analysis) -- What a day! The crowd was elbow to elbow, and it was electric. Hundreds of thousands of people are here because of a group of teenagers from Florida, who lived through a nightmare and are determined that no other high school student should have to. You could barely move through the crowd it was so packed with bodies. But as uncomfortable as the closeness might have been on public transportation or at an amusement park, the people were very cordial in that environment. There was a unity in the crowd, inspired by these young agents of change.

[MICHAEL D. SHEAR: Show of Force as Students' Grief Inspires Huge Gun Protests](#)(New York Times reports) -- The young people delivered an anguished and defiant message: They are "done hiding" from gun violence, and will stop at nothing to get politicians to prevent it. For many, the rallies were their first act of protest and a political awakening. The most powerful moments came from the surviving students of the shooting last month in Parkland, Fla.

[Rallies Across Nation Call for Tougher Gun Laws](#) (Wall Street Journal reports) - - Hundreds of thousands of young people and their supporters rallied from California to Connecticut to demand stricter gun laws in America.

[In huge D.C. rally, students demand action against gun violence](#) (Washington Post reports) -- Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators gathered in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere, calling on Congress to enact stricter gun-control laws. Survivors of the Parkland, Fla., school shooting had an unequivocal message to legislators: Ignoring the toll of school shootings and everyday gun violence will no longer be tolerated. "Either represent the people or get out. Stand for us or beware. The voters are coming," one student said.

[ALEX KOLYER: N.C. Students, Allies March For Gun Control Laws](#) (WUNC-FM reports) -- High school students and allies seeking stronger gun control laws in North Carolina following last month's Florida school shooting are walking through downtown Raleigh in solidarity with a similar weekend rally in Washington.

[MICHAEL ABRAMOWITZ: Students share pain, fear and determination to end school gun violence](#) (Greenville Daily Reflector reports) -- For many of the more

Courthouse, the March for Our Lives rally against gun violence in schools was their first experience as activists. They vowed that it would not be their last. The rally was organized and coordinated by a group of students from several Pitt County schools and led by Lauren Bordeaux, 18, a senior at The Oakwood School in Greenville.

[ANN DOSS HELMS & LAVENDRICK SMITH: 'Fix this disgraceful issue.'](#)
[Students lead big Charlotte rally against gun violence](#) (Charlotte Observer reports) -- Youths and adults packed Charlotte's First Ward Park Saturday morning demanding that politicians protect the innocence and safety of children from gun violence. Charlotte's March For Our Lives rally was one of more than 800 student-led events worldwide calling for action to end mass shootings. Teen organizers said their innocence has been denied them, as a generation born in the aftermath of the 1999 Columbine school shooting and exposed to steady reports of mass shootings ever since.

[MARGARET MOFFETT: Students swell the streets of Greensboro to take a stand on stricter gun laws](#) (Greensboro News & Record reports) -- Underneath ponchos and umbrellas rose voices so loud, you could almost ignore the pitter-patter of raindrops on downtown streets.

[CAMMIE BELLAMY : 2,000 march for gun reform in downtown Wilmington](#) (Wilmington Star-News reports) -- Student-led March for Our Lives draws massive turnout

[NEEL KELLER: Hundreds make their voices heard in Nags Head](#) (Outer Banks Sentinel reports) -- Participating in a nationwide wave of rallies to both honor the victims of the February 14 school shooting in Florida and call for action to end the violence, several hundred students, parents and concerned citizens gathered at Dowdy Park in Nags Head on Saturday, March 24 for a "March for our Lives."

[ALEXANDERIA BORDAS & SAM DEGRAVE: 6,000 call for change at Asheville's March For Our Lives](#) (Asheville Citizen-Times reports) -- The March For Our Lives drew a crowd of more than 6,000. Like the Women's March earlier this year, the Asheville rally was organized by high school girls from WNC and passion was at the core of their mission — to bring an end to gun violence in schools. "Enough is enough!" attendees chanted in unison while marching.

[JENNY DRABBLE: 'Enough is enough' — 1,500 people crowd Corpening Plaza to demand change in wake of school shootings](#) (Winston-Salem Journal) -- More than 1,500 people stood in complete silence Saturday in tribute to the 17 people killed in a school shooting in Parkland, Fla., last month.

[MIKE MCHUGH: 'Safety for our Schools' petitions concern from area residents](#) (Jacksonville Daily News reports) -- A Swansboro grocery store parking lot became a destination Saturday morning for people seeking change to current gun laws and show support for the "March for Our Lives" movement. Cape Carteret resident and retired school teacher Ann vonHoorn organized "Safety for our Schools" as a way to stimulate conversation about gun violence and school safety. "This is not a party issue. This is not a 'liberal' or

table she had covered with eight different petitions for interested individuals to sign.

[JORDAN HENSLEY: March For Our Lives Hickory](#) (Hickory Record reports) --

On March 24, over 300 children, teens and adults of all ages, genders, races and political affiliations gathered at the YMCA Teen Center in Hickory to advocate for stricter gun laws. From there, they marched to Union Square in Downtown Hickory.

[ROBERT MOORE: Students, supporters take to Hendersonville's streets](#) (Hendersonville Times-News reports) --

"Never again" and "Books, not bullets" were among the many chants heard as several hundred area students, parents and supporters took to the streets in Hendersonville Saturday. The Hendersonville event was one of many March for Our Lives gatherings across the nation, calling for lawmakers to take action to address gun violence in schools

[JOHN HAWLEY: March For Our Lives: Hundred walk for gun law changes](#) (Elizabeth City Daily Advance) --

Hundreds of thousands of people across the globe marched in "March For Our Lives" events on Saturday in response to a plague of repetitive and deadly gun violence, including nearly 100 in Elizabeth City.

[JOE JOHNSON: Thousands rally at CCB Plaza in Durham's 'March For Our Lives' event](#) (Durham Herald-Sun reports) --

A crowd of perhaps 2,000 protesters filled CCB Plaza in downtown Durham shortly before noon Saturday, joining more than 800 local protests around the nation in conjunction with the national Washington, D.C., "March for Our Lives" rally.

[T. KEUNG HUI: To improve safety, some rural NC school districts look to armed volunteers](#) (Durham Herald-Sun analysis) --

Some rural North Carolina school systems are taking advantage of a state law allowing them to have retired law enforcement officers and military police officers serve as armed volunteers. Urban districts aren't as interested in the option.

[TIM WHITE: Children lead their parents in a call for sanity](#) (Fayetteville Observer column) --

They're marching on Washington this weekend. They're assembling here in Fayetteville too, and in cities and towns across the country. They're children, rising up to lead the nation's adults — talking more like responsible grownups than the grownups themselves. "The child," as Wordsworth wrote, "is father of the man." The kids are talking about guns and the way we grownups have been so sloppy about them.

POLICY& POLITICS

[ANNA R SCHECTER: Foreigners worked for Cambridge Analytica on NC Senate campaign](#) (NBC News reports) --

Chris Wylie, a 28-year-old Canadian who ran messaging for Cambridge Analytica out of its London office in 2014, said he worked on all the company's U.S. political campaigns in 2014, "and stopped at most of them, like Thom Tillis's campaign." Tillis ran for and won a U.S. Senate seat in North Carolina in 2014. Wylie said that many foreign nationals worked on the campaigns, and many were embedded in the campaigns around the U.S. "It was not just me," he said. "Like 20 other people

Romanians, Greeks."

[LAURA LESLIE: Tillis campaign says aliens worked for state party, not campaign](#) (WRAL-TV analysis) -- A report from NBC News claims foreign nationals employed by Cambridge Analytica were embedded in North Carolina in 2014, working on the U.S. Senate campaign of Thom Tillis. The Tillis campaign says the report is untrue. NBC cites two former Cambridge Analytica employees, one unnamed, who claim direct knowledge of the matter. Its main source is Christopher Wylie, an early employee of Cambridge Analytica and its parent company, military contractor SCL.

[CRAIG TIMBERG & TOM HAMBURGER: Cambridge Analytica sent foreigners to advise U.S. campaigns, former workers say](#) (Washington Post analysis) -- The 2014 effort to provide campaign strategy and messaging advice to Republican candidates came as executives were cautioned by an attorney to abide by U.S. laws limiting foreign involvement in elections. Whistleblower Christopher Wylie said the "dirty little secret was that there was no one American involved in it, that it was a de facto foreign agent, working on an American election."

[MATTNEW HAAG: Remington, Centuries-Old Gun Maker, Files for Bankruptcy as Sales Slow](#) (New York Times reports) -- Remington Outdoor, one of the oldest firearm manufacturers in the United States, filed for bankruptcy protection on Sunday amid mounting debt and declining sales. The company, which was founded in upstate New York in 1816 but is now based in North Carolina, was acquired in 2007 by the private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management for \$118 million. The firm rolled it up with other gun manufacturers, including the maker of the Bushmaster rifle, into a conglomerate called Freedom Group.

[ERIK SPANBERG: Cooper on conversations with Panthers bidders, keeping team in Charlotte](#) (Charlotte Business Journal analysis) -- Gov. Roy Cooper has spoken with potential buyers of the Carolina Panthers and Charlotte business and political leaders about ensuring the NFL franchise stays put.

[STEPHANIE CARSON: NC Population Boom Presents Challenge to Cities, State](#) (Public News Service analysis) -- If you feel like there are more people living in your town, you're likely not imagining it. Two-thirds of the state saw growth between 2016 and 2017, according to the latest estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau. Estimates show that as of last July, 10.3 million people call the state home, making it the ninth most populous in the country. State demographer Michael Cline says while the growth is welcome, it presents a challenge to municipalities.

[COREY FRIEDMAN: Civil rights inspire Earls' Supreme Court bid](#) (Wilson Times) -- Anita Earls helped to establish the Durham-based Southern Coalition for Social Justice, a nonprofit civil rights advocacy and legal assistance group, in 2007. A decade later, she decided to aim still higher, seeking a seat on the North Carolina Supreme Court. That goal brought Earls face to face with progressive politicians and party faithful as she gave the keynote speech for the Wilson County Democratic Party's annual convention in a second-floor

Barbara Jackson, a Republican, for the only open seat on the state's highest court.

[RAY GRONBERG: At Duke, slavery, Jim Crow and Confederate memorials are about to get more attention](#) (Durham Herald-Sun reports) -- Duke University's year-long discussion of Confederate memorials and how universities are dealing with the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow continues next week with a two-day, public symposium. Sponsored by Provost Sally Kornbluth's office, the conference will bring to Durham some of the experts involved in helping their home institutions unravel and document the extent of their involvement with slavery. Most will take the stage March 30, the symposium's opening day, to participate in a two-part discussion of how schools like the University of Virginia, Furman University and Georgetown University have gone about the process of "reckoning with the past."

[MARTH WAGGONER: Planned Russian statue starts mini-Cold War in Elizabeth City](#)(AP news analysis) -- In World War II when the U.S. and Russia were allied against the Nazis, hundreds of Soviet aviators were trained on the North Carolina coast as part of a secret spy project — but now, an effort to honor their mission has triggered a miniature Cold War in a small American city. The Russian Ministry of Defense wants to place a 25-ton bronze monument in Elizabeth City, where the recently declassified "Project Zebra" was carried out. Russia would pay for the 13-foot tall monument, with the city footing the bill for improvements to the as-yet undeveloped park on the Pasquotank River where it would be located. But amid international tensions and fears about Russian hacking of U.S. elections, Elizabeth City elected officials have rejected a memorandum of understanding that was to be the next step.

[CHLOE MOORES: Amid talk of deportation, farmers defend immigrant labor](#)(AP/Statesville Record & Landmark reports) -- He's now an Iredell County agriculture worker. But 10 years ago this month, he was embarking on a journey to leave Mexico and cross the U.S. border in hopes of giving his family a better life.

[A road-map for transforming state's workforce](#) (Wilmington Star-News) -- If you haven't already, we highly encourage you to read Thursday's OpEd piece by UNC System President Margaret Spellings. While Spellings points out significant accomplishments at UNCW, she is very frank about a critical problem for our region and elsewhere across the state -- overall, our workforce does not have the level of education that employers require. While we work hard to lure businesses to North Carolina, a bigger priority should be ensuring workers are prepared

EDUCATION

[JANE STANCILL: UNC President Margaret Spellings will get a \\$95,000 bonus](#) (Durham Herald-Sun reports) -- UNC President Margaret Spellings was given \$95,000 incentive pay, including \$50,000 in cash and \$45,000 into a retirement account, after a performance review by the UNC Board of Governors.

Pines Pilot) -- Sandhills Theater Arts Renaissance School, one of two charter schools currently in Moore County, has been sold to an Oregon corporation with the intent to expand capacity and develop a high school component. American Education Properties bought the eight-acre school property and the main school building for \$2.2 million on March 14. AEP is the facilities branch of Charter School Capital, which specializes in offering financing to charter schools in a dozen states throughout the country.

[JANE STANCILL: Here's how much UNC system students will pay next year in tuition and fees](#) (Durham Herald-Sun reports) -- Tuition will be flat or decline for in-state students in the UNC system next year, but fees are on the rise. The UNC Board of Governors approved 2018-19 tuition and fees for the state's public universities.

[CHARLES HICKMAN: I helped make desegregation in schools work once. We can do it again.](#) (Charlotte Observer column) -- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools was a national model of desegregation in the early 1970s. CMS can lead the way again.

[ALEX GRANADOS: Unexpected access to high-quality educators](#) (EdNC interview) -- Andy Baxter, vice president of educator effectiveness at the Southern Regional Education Board, talks about the unexpected ways that students may gain access to high-quality teachers.

[ADAM RHEW: N.C.'s teaching force—like the nation's—fails to match student demographics](#) (EdNC column) -- Despite a rapidly diversifying student body, teachers in North Carolina schools are disproportionately white. In the 2016-17 school year, 80 percent of North Carolina's roughly 94,000 public school teachers were white. That proportion far outpaces the ratio of white students—just less than half of the 1.4 million-person student body.

HEALTH

[CELIA RIVENBARK: I got rhythm ... I got pregnant \(can I ask for anything more?\)](#) (Wilmington Star-News column) -- The Department of Health and Human Services recently announced it will give preference when allocating grant money to agencies that endorse “natural family planning” and abstinence instead of those that prescribe birth control

[Opioid overdoses continue](#) (Winston-Salem Journal) -- We knew things were likely to get worse before they got better, but it's still disconcerting to read the latest numbers about opioid overdoses in North Carolina. The situation is as dire as ever.

[RICHARD GROVES: Expressing our deep response to loss](#) (Winston-Salem Journal column) -- My friend — I will call him Tom — posted on Facebook a picture of his son holding Tom's 6-year-old grandson, beaming the way any loving father would. “This was the last time my son saw his son,” Tom wrote. “My son died of an overdose last night. He was 34 and beat me to the grave.

[Two approaches — one serious, one not — to opioids](#) (Elizabeth City Daily Advance) -- We were struck by two recent starkly different prescriptions for responding to the burgeoning opioid addiction crisis that's killing thousands of

[REBECCA WALTER: Substance abuse taxing county foster care system](#) (Hendersonville Times-News analysis) -- Substance abuse is the

greatest common denominator in foster care cases in Henderson County, which continue to increase year after year. Most children in foster care are there due to a number of factors, according to Kevin Marino, social work program administrator with the Henderson County Department of Social Services.

[TAYLOR KNOFF: Vidant Rolls Out New Virtual Care Model](#) (N.C. Health News analysis) -- VidantNow allows patients anywhere in eastern North Carolina to access a doctor online, anytime. It's only one way that physicians are using telehealth to care for remote patients.

[Cherokee agency risked children's welfare](#) (Winston-Salem Journal) -- Thanks to some heavy-handed maneuvering from child-welfare workers in Cherokee County, the well being of many children there is likely to be tossed into disarray. This should concern child-welfare advocates throughout the state.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

[Szoka: Green technology driving policy changes](#) (Elizabeth City Daily Advance reports) -- Green technologies are driving rapid technological change and policymakers are working to keep up, a leading member of the N.C. House of Representatives said during Saturday's "Green Saves Green Expo" in Elizabeth City.

[TAFT WIREBACK: Duke Energy wants to raise rates — and you probably won't like why](#) (Greensboro News & Record analysis) -- Like it or not, your electric bill's probably going up to deal with coal ash waste generated for decades by coal-fired power plants and never given a proper burial. The state Utilities Commission also is likely to grant Duke Energy Carolinas an increase to cover higher costs of keeping its basic system humming smoothly along ... or sputtering occasionally, depending on your point of view. In addition, rates for Duke Energy Carolinas customers across the Triad are probably going up to pay for an abortive effort to build a nuclear plant in South Carolina.

[GREG BARNES: Secrets, denials and toxic water: The story behind the GenX crisis](#)(Fayetteville Observer analysis) -- Part 1 of a special report: In many ways, DuPont's environmental crisis in the Ohio River Valley is now playing out in southeastern North Carolina, where the company made C8 and GenX at its Fayetteville Works plant.

[Poor funding handicaps GenX study, cleanup](#) (Fayetteville Observer) -- Despite all the questions, and all the regulatory inadequacies, our lawmakers have failed to respond. The House passed a measure adding DEQ funding but the Senate refused to go along with it, passing a vastly different bill instead. In the end, nothing was approved and the legislators went home. Government has failed its constituents, on a breathtaking scale. We hope there are profound political consequences for those responsible.

[Offshore oil battle brews](#) (Fayetteville Observer) -- Several states — including South Carolina — are taking other measures to keep the drilling rigs away,

production from being built in or crossing their state waters. But especially in our neighbor to the south, there's plenty of support for drilling as well. It's going to be a battle royal. Yet the issue is already settled in virtually all coastal communities: Residents don't want it. They see it as a threat to their very existence. And it is. There may come a time when we need the oil and gas that are out there, but this isn't it.

[JENNIFRE ALLEN: Best Bet For Healthy Gardens: Go Native](#) (Coastal Review column) -- Spring's arrival means planting season for home gardeners, and though the options are endless, native plant species are the best choice for success and a healthy ecosystem.

[RUSTY JACOBS: Tree Cutting Is Underway For The Atlantic Coast Pipeline, But Opposition In NC Is Staunch](#) (WUNC-FM analysis) -- Crews are already cutting trees in Northampton and Robeson counties to make way for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, the 600-mile-long delivery system that will carry natural gas from West Virginia, across Virginia, and through North Carolina. The pipeline will cut an eight-county, 200-mile-long path across the Tar Heel State with supporters and opponents all along the route.

... AND MORE

[LAURA DOUGLASS: Report Faults Military in Handling of Military Dogs](#) (Southern Pines Pilot analysis) -- The bungled adoption of more than 200 military dogs in Southern Pines more than four years ago was mismanaged by the U.S. Army and not the local contractor, according to a report released this month by the House Armed Services Committee.

[SEAN WALSH, served in Gov. Jim Hunt's administration:](#) (Moser Funeral Home Obit) -- On March 19, 2018 Sean Walsh, beloved spouse of 17 years to Samuel Luis Rodriguez and dog-dad to Harper and Bug (Alexandria VA), brother, and uncle to many loved nieces and nephews, passed away at his home in Marshall, VA. Sean grew up in North Carolina, and attended UNC-Greensboro. He served as Communications Director under the administration of NC Gov. Jim Hunt. A memorial in his honor will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington VA.

[JOSH SHAFFER: Was pirate's treasure pirated? Suit says NC stole Blackbeard footage](#)(Charlotte Observer reports) -- In pirate lore, Blackbeard ranks among the foulest criminals of the sea, known for keeping lit candles under his hat to frighten enemies with a smoking face. But in a lawsuit that persists in federal court, a documentary filmmaker accuses North Carolina of committing a modern form of treasure looting: using his copyrighted underwater footage without permission.

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